



**Circular 0042/2024**

**To the Managerial Authorities of all recognised primary schools**

## **Say Yes to Languages – primary languages sampler module**

### **Context**

The Department of Education is offering all recognised primary schools an opportunity to apply to take part in the *Say Yes to Languages* sampler module (including Irish Sign Language), which will be offered again in the 2024/2025 school year.

The policy background for the introduction of a modern foreign language in a redeveloped Primary School Curriculum is found in [Languages Connect - Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017 - 2026](#).

The [Primary Curriculum Framework](#), Published in March 2023 “acknowledges the language learning journeys that all children are on in English and Irish. It also acknowledges and harnesses the diversity of languages, including Irish Sign Language, used in Irish primary and special schools. It supports the introduction of modern foreign languages in stages 3 and 4, incrementally building on children’s existing knowledge and awareness of language and progressing from a language awareness model to a competency model in stage 4”.

The Primary Language Curriculum – including draft Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) was also revised to support the inclusion of Modern Foreign Languages in the current Primary Language Curriculum and was published in March 2024 for public consultation.

### **Aims and Targets**

In line with the model described in the documents listed above, the module will target pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup>. to 6<sup>th</sup> class.

The *Say Yes to Languages* sampler module aims to:

- Generate awareness among pupils of the range of languages used by their peers, including Irish Sign Language, in their schools and communities which may help support greater inclusion and appreciation of diversity in society
- Encourage uptake of languages at post-primary level



- Provide opportunities for increased levels of collaboration among the school community
- with regard to the celebration of languages and cultures
- Support implementation of Languages Connect, Ireland's [Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017–2026](#).

## Organisation and Duration

Schools will be supported by Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) in providing the *Say Yes to Languages* sampler module. Schools are invited to familiarise themselves with the following requirements, before applying:

- Schools will identify any language of their choice, including Irish Sign Language (ISL) based on teaching capacity and demographics
- Schools will make arrangements to secure a language teacher/tutor (e.g. a classroom-based teacher already working in the school, a language teacher/foreign language assistant from a post-primary school /a member of the school/wider community, including pupils' parents/guardians)
- All visiting language teachers/tutors will work under the guidance of the class teacher in terms of advice provided in [Circular 0042/2018](#), around Garda vetting and other child protection requirements
- Schools will decide the number of classes they wish to apply for, considering that the sampler module is targeted at pupils in 3rd to 6th class, and that, for funding purposes, a classroom combining two year groups will count as one unit (see the paragraph Funding and Payment below for more details on grant funds)
- The classes will take place within the normal school timetable, for a total of ten hours per classroom, over a period of ten weeks
- Each weekly hour of tuition can be a single, hour-long class or any combination of shorter classes (e.g. two half-hour-long classes) adding up to an hour
- Schools will commit to encourage their teacher/tutor to participate in training provided by PPLI
- The school's link person, hosting teachers and management representatives should also participate in information sessions provided by PPLI

## Eligibility

This programme is open for voluntary application by all recognised English-medium and Irish-medium primary and special schools, including those already involved in previous school years.



## Application

Schools must apply by filling in all required information and submitting this [Application Form 2024/25](#)

The deadline for application is **5pm on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Please note that the application form link will be deactivated after the deadline.

Participation will be confirmed to schools by 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## Selection

Participation is not guaranteed to all applying schools, and the Department/PPLI will establish a panel to evaluate applications based on the requirements and criteria below.

### Minimum requirements

At the time of applying, schools commit to:

- Deliver the module within specified timeframes (PPLI will advise whether each school will take part in term 1, or 2 of the school year) and for the full number of hours (10 hours per pupil/class)
- Provide feedback and facilitate school visits by PPLI staff
- Provide details of how they will engage in promotion and dissemination
- Communicate with PPLI for the successful implementation of the module
- Engage with PPLI in relation to relevant research
- Provide other required details within specified deadlines (e.g. schools' bank account details required for the payment of grant funds)

### Other criteria for selection

- Re-applying schools where a teacher on staff will deliver the module should commit to using part of the grant to fund participation in language upskilling courses (see Funding and Payment section for further details)
- Re-applying schools must have also previously met all the requirements of the programme and provided feedback as requested

Automatic inclusion will be granted to:

- Schools designating a registered primary teacher to deliver the module
- Schools availing of visiting tutors, if they nominate a teacher on staff who



commits to participate in a funded language upskilling course (various course options will be available throughout the year, outside of school time, see [languagesconnect.ie/language-upskilling/](https://languagesconnect.ie/language-upskilling/) for further information)

- Schools applying to take part for the first time, provided that they meet the minimum eligibility requirements of the programme

In the assessment process, priority will be given to schools which:

- Have provided contact details of their teacher/tutor at application time
- Have expressed a preference for a lesser-taught language
- Have identified a member of staff willing to take part in a language upskilling course
- Will be willing to participate in awareness-raising activities and events

### Funding and Payment

Funding for the programme is provided to successful schools via a grant paid directly into the school's bank account. The payment will be based on the number of participating classrooms (two year groups combined in one classroom will count as one unit) as follows:

- 1 classroom participating, €500
- 2 classrooms, €1000
- 3 classrooms, €1500
- 4 classrooms, €2000

**Please note** that re-applying schools where a teacher on staff will deliver the module should commit to using part of the grant to fund participation in language upskilling courses.

The funding provided through Say Yes to Languages for schools that have classroom-based teachers with foreign languages capacity is an opportunity for these teachers to upskill in a foreign language and thereby prepare for the introduction of foreign languages in the curriculum.

Schools that do not have a classroom-based teacher or other members of staff with capacity to teach the foreign language can make arrangements with an externally identified teacher/tutor for the payment of their work in exchange for an invoice.

Schools and teachers/tutors can refer to the hourly rates specified in the Department of Education's salary scales documentation, accessible from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/84856-salary-scales/>



### **Queries in relation to this circular**

Queries in relation to this circular should be emailed to:  
[CAP\\_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie](mailto:CAP_Helpdesk@education.gov.ie) or [primary@ppli.ie](mailto:primary@ppli.ie)

A list of frequently asked questions can also be found on

[Say Yes to Languages - FAQs](#)

### **Dissemination of circular**

A copy of this circular should be provided to members of the board of management and the staff of the school. A copy should also be provided to the parents' association. This circular may be accessed on the Department of Education website at [gov.ie/education](http://gov.ie/education). An Irish version of this circular is also available on the Department's website.

**Issued by: Evelyn O'Connor, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit**

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